

Setting a Strategic Agenda for the North Central Climate Science Center



NORTH CENTRAL
**CLIMATE
SCIENCE**
CENTER

Context: The North Central CSC ([NC CSC](#)) was established in 2011, and adopted a strategic science plan for 2012-2017. NC CSC is now seeking input from management partners on strategic directions and opportunities for 2018-2022.

Key elements of the NC CSC agenda are not expected to change, including

- A primary focus on climate impacts and adaptation
- A primary focus on impacts to natural and cultural resources
- A growing focus on impacts related to livelihoods and socio-economic concerns
- Continued emphasis on *co-development* and *starting with the decision*
- Continued attention to tribal and indigenous needs and perspectives

Key Questions for Management Partners: Rather than requesting “science needs” – products or services managers perceive as useful, the NC CSC philosophy is to work directly with managers on identifying and addressing these needs, in a collaborative fashion (i.e. co-development).

For this strategic planning process, NC CSC seeks guidance on a broader suite of strategic questions that will influence the types of products we provide, the types of individuals we hire, and the nature of our interactions with management partners.

- **What are the most important decisions in your agency that will require climate-related information?** (Describe timeframes, interested parties, climate-related issues, etc.)
- **Should drought and water availability continue as the central theme of NC CSCs science?**
 - Should another topic be added (or replace drought)? (e.g. fire, avoiding species listings)
- **What would be the ideal allocation of NC CSC resources among the following:**
 - *Science: research, synthesis, technical assistance*
 - *Communications: Ensuring the effective translation / communication of scientific information to users*
 - *Capacity building: formal (university) training; professional development*
 - *Convening/Partnerships: fostering regional dialogue on climate /adaptation/science needs and solutions*
- **What would be your ideal distribution of resources between:**
 - Early and sustained engagement with specific planning / decision processes
 - “Quick reaction forces” – standing capacity for short term technical assistance
- **What are the most useful formats / products – how do you best take information in?**
 - *Synthesis of what is known*
 - *Hosting workshops*
 - *Intensive original research*
 - *Short term “consulting” or advice*
 - *Local training*
 - *Other (describe)*
- **What type of guidance would facilitate identifying, evaluating, and selecting among adaptation options?** What information would help the transition from planning to implementation?

Key Questions for Science Partners: In addition to working directly with managers to address immediate decisions, NC CSC scientists are exploring the “bleeding edge” of current scientific thinking in all three fundamental science areas identified by NC CSVC – *projecting climate futures, identifying impacts and vulnerabilities, and moving toward adaptation design and implementation*.

- **What (fundamental, foundational, deep) science questions hinder our ability to respond to management challenges?** Where would investment in “upstream” science produce improved insights for management applications?
- **What tools and techniques have we developed that could move towards operational mode?** Where can we move from a research posture to a production / operational posture – enabling broader application of our techniques and insights?
- **What strategies / resources are available to increase synthesis production?** Users have expressed a desire for “state of the science” reviews on a broad range of topics. Are there approaches that could make such documents an attractive proposition for researchers?
- **What guidance could we develop to support managers’ identifying, evaluating, and selecting among adaptation options?** How do you believe scientific insights and information can assist managers in identifying, evaluating, selecting, and implementing adaptation responses?

Resources

- **NC CSC hosted a a webinar** on August 17 to introduce the strategic planning process. The Powerpoint presentation from that webex is posted on the NC CSC website (see below); a 508-compliant transcript will be posted as well.
- The NC CSC website has documents related to NC CSC’s past plans and performance as well as this strategic planning effort. See: <http://nccsc.colostate.edu/science-agenda>
- NC CSC staff are prepared to organize briefings, teleconferences, listening sessions and the like for interested partners.

Questions? Input?

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